



Sample Review of Metadata Tools

Name/Version: ASCII Metadata Template

Function: metadata entry aid

ASCII template with two space or tabbed indents (Contains all 1998 elements)

Platform: Any which has a text editor or wordprocessor

Principal Contact: -

Date of last known release: -

Status: Complete, contains all the elements of FGDC-STD-001-1998

Metadata Storage Structure: Discrete

Description: The ASCII metadata template is an aid to help users create metadata with the content of the CSDGM and in a structure which can pass *mp*. The user is expected to open the template with a text editor or word processor and type metadata into the template at each appropriate metadata element. The template document includes all of the possible options and choices for elements and compound elements of metadata. It needs to be modified before metadata created on its framework will be CSDGM-compliant — primarily this will involve retaining one instance of “choice” elements and deleting the others, but may also involve duplicating elements which can be repeated. A user would normally create a site-specific document from the original full-blown ASCII template, then create additional metadata documents for specific data sets from the site-specific document. Because there is no indication in the template as to what is required, optional, one of a choice, or repeatable, the user needs to have a copy of the CSDGM handy to hand, or to refer to the *Colorized CSDGM* or Susan Stitt’s metadata graphics for this information.

ASCII and word processor template documents were used before more advanced metadata entry tools were developed. Unfortunately, the formatting (indentation, numbering) of many of these templates were not acceptable to *mp*, which has very strict input formatting requirements. This frequently necessitated reformatting, filtering, and tedious editing of template based metadata before it could be placed on a clearinghouse. Because of this and other reasons, there has been a shift from ASCII templates to more sophisticated metadata entry tools. However, some of these “sophisticated” tools are platform- or GIS-specific, have large system resource requirements, or are still really in the development stage, thus ASCII templates still have some appeal. *ASCII templates have been given a second lease on life by cns, which smoothes the path to mp.*

Cost: none

Notable Plus: Simple and reliable.

Notable Minus: Because there are no limitations on cutting and pasting of sections of the template document, it is relatively easy to create a document which does not conform to the CSDGM. No on-line help.

Sample of Interface: NA

Sample Output: NA

Don't Duck
Metadata

